

A Fulfilled Christian Life, Part 5 - Romans 12:6-8 – January 6th, 2013

- Today's teaching will be part five of a series titled; "A Fulfilled Christian Life."
- Here-to-fore, the Apostle Paul, by the Holy Spirit, has shown us four prerequisites to how we can live a joy filled, and fulfilled Christian life.
- It's for this reason that I'll need to quickly review them, as it will be germane to our understanding of the fifth one, which we'll see today.

1. By laying my life down for Him (Verse 1)

- Paul writes, in light of God's mercy we should offer our bodies as living sacrifices holy and pleasing to God as our spiritual act of worship.

2. By renewing my mind in Him (Verse 2)

- He then says conform no longer to the world's pattern. Be transformed by renewing of your mind to prove what God's perfect will is for you.

3. By living humbly before Him (Verse 3)

- Paul warns us to not think more highly of our self than we ought, but think of our self with sober judgment according to the faith God gives.

4. By functioning as a body with Him (Verses 4-5)

- He says we all have one body with many members. They don't function in the same way, as many form one body belonging to the others.

5. By using my gifts from Him (Verses 6-8)

- v6 He says, we're all given different gifts according to God's grace, then lists prophesying, saying it's to be used in proportion to ones faith.
- v7 Paul goes on to list two more gifts beginning with the gift of serving saying let him serve, then the gift of teaching, saying let him teach.
- v8 He lists four more gifts, for a total of seven, the gift of encouraging, the gift of giving, the gift of leadership, and the last, the gift of mercy.

- In order to better understand these seven unmerited gifts God gives by His grace, we'll first look at each one individually, then collectively.
- In so doing, I can identify which gift God has given me personally and how it is that I can use that gift to both edify the body and glorify God.
- Furthermore by doing this I'll have more of a propensity to live that joy filled and fulfilled Christian life knowing that by faith I can use my gift.
- The first one is the gift of prophecy, and you'll know you have it, if you're one who is never happier than when you speak forth God's Word.
- When one has a God given ability to speak a prophetic Word, from God's Word, into the life of another, it will evidence the gift of prophecy.
- Those who've been given this gift have this supernatural ability to connect the prophetic dots of scripture, to a specific situation in ones life.

1 Corinthians 14:3 NIV But everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort.

- The second one is the gift of serving, and you'll know you have it if you're one whose always throwing the rubbish, and washing the dishes.
- It's interesting to note that some translations render this as the gift of ministry, this because by serving others, we're ministering to others.
- The gift of serving is your ministry, and you are never happier than when you are using this gift to serve the physical needs of the body.
- The third one is the gift of teaching, and you'll know you have it if you're one who preaches and teaches very long sermons from the pulpit.
- You'll know you have the gift of teaching God's Word, if you have this supernatural ability to provide practical instruction to live a godly life.
- It's similar in a way to the gift of prophecy, in that you're able to connect the practical dots of scripture, to a specific situation in ones life.
- The fourth one is the gift of encouragement, and you'll know you have it if your first response in certain situations is to encourage someone.
- Some translations render this exhortation, and it carries with it the idea of encouraging people to be doers, not merely hearers of the Word.
- Those with this gift can be perceived as being unloving, because they have to tell you what you need to hear, not what you want to hear.

Proverbs 27:6 NIV Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses.

- The fifth one is the gift of giving, and you'll know you have it if you're one who derives great joy in giving money and not boasting about it.
- You'll also know you have the gift of giving if you also have the gift of getting. By that I mean, God will abundantly supply this particular gift.
- By the way, God only does this because He knows that we will be good stewards and generous givers of the monies that He entrusts to us.
- The sixth one is the gift of leading, and you'll know you have it when you find yourself with people who are actually following you on Twitter.
- This gift will be evidenced in how people will be trusting in, and following of, your leadership, as God has granted you this leadership gift.
- However, it's interesting to note, that one must use this particular gift with diligence, meaning that it will require a measure of perseverance.
- The seventh one is the gift of mercy, and you'll know you have it when you not only find it easy to show mercy you're even cheerful doing it.
- What comes packaged with the gift of mercy is genuine compassion and sympathy for others, so much so, that you minister mercy to them.
- Those with this gift derive great joy and fulfillment in life by weeping with those who weep, and showing mercy to those who are suffering.

In closing, let's look at all these gifts collectively. By way of illustration, let's say that my twelve-year-old son Levi notices that I need a glass of water and proceeds to bring one to me at the pulpit. Because his shoes had become untied, he trips and falls just as he's about to give it to me. Upon seeing this seven people rush to the front of the sanctuary and begin using their gifts. The one with the gift of prophecy will say something like, "Levi, in the future, be prudent and foresee the danger of not having your shoes tied." The one with the gift of serving doesn't say anything they just grab some towels and get busy cleaning up the mess. The one with the gift of teaching will say something like; "Levi, perhaps it would be wiser for you to purchase shoes that don't have shoelaces." The one with the gift of encouragement will say something like; "Levi, don't be discouraged, we all stumble and fall, be encouraged." The one with the gift of giving says; "Levi, here take this fifty dollars and go buy yourself some new Velcro shoes." The one with the gift of leading is the one who everyone looks to take the lead, and will say something like; "Levi, just bring a bottle of water that has a lid on it instead." The one with the gift of mercy will give Levi a hug and say something like; "it's OK, I know how you feel, don't be embarrassed, nobody's mad at you, I'm here for you."